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# LITTLE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

# 1977 – 1979

# The little crimes of Herve

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**Rena Pederson / *Radio-TV***

**PROBABLY** the only time I ever impressed my husband with my savoir faire about the show business world was the time I spotted Herve Villechaize in a rowdy French restaurant.

"Herve who?" you may be thinking.

Herve Villechaize, although not exactly a household word, is a very talented and articulate actor who happens to be a midget.

He made a marked impression on me as the malevolent little butler-henchman in the James Bond movie "The Man With The Golden Gun." He scurried around serving drinks from a silver platter to the bad guys and threatened Bond in a raspy voice with a thick French accent. Not the sort of mini-villain I could easily forget.

We were having a grand time at the Cafe des Artistes back in 1975 during a trip to Paris. We were wolfing down delicious chunks of French bread, terrine du chef and glass after glass of vin rouge. A soccer team was celebrating a victory at a large corner table, singing naughty songs in French and laughing uproariously with the rest of the customers

Through the hilarity and Gaulois smoke, I recognized Herve Villechaize in cozy conversation with an attractive young woman. Nobody at my table would believe me, so I rather cheekily went over to him and asked in wretched college French (one semester, B-minus) if he were indeed Herve Villechaize.

"I certainly am," he said in perfect English. "Who are you?" He seemed pleased he had been recognized and the girl was definitely impressed. In fact, he came over to our table and graciously joined us for a drink. It turned out Herve also is a talented photographer and had an exhibit at the gallery next door to the cafe. We exchanged addresses and he promised to stop by Dallas for Mexican food some time.

**I FORGOT** about the incident until I received a postcard about a year later, informing me that Herve was in Los Angeles working on some new films and TV shows.

Another year passed before I was in Los Angeles for some TV interviews. Of course, I called Herve — and we had a fascinating chat for almost an hour.

He had been very busy: ratings were so good for the first "Fantasy Island" movie-chiller on ABC with Herve and Ricardo Montalban, that a sequel was being planned ("Return to Fantasy Island" — which will be shown at 8 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20 on Channel 8). He also had been filming a movie called "The One and Only" with Henry ("The Fonz") Winkler in New York and working on a script with Joan Tewksbury (scriptwriter for "Nashville").

Although he often plays mini-villains, Herve is very choosy and refuses to accept roles that would be demeaning or mock midgets. "You've got to respect yourself," he explains. "If you're a good actor you must not demean yourself or your talent. I will take a role that is the second or third or even fourth lead in a picture. But I don't want a role where I would just be a shadow in the background."



*Herve Villechaize: I'm not a monster. I'm just a human being.*

Herve has plenty of credentials to back up his ambitions. He studied acting in New York with Julie Bovasso and has appeared on Broadway in "Elizabeth the First" and "Gloria and Esperenze." Off-Broadway, he has performed in "Honest to God Schnozola," "The Moon Dreamers" and "Young Master Dante." For the Hartford Stage Company he has appeared in "Ubu Roi" and "Rosencranz and Gildenstern Are Dead." He did "Scuba Duba" at the Philadelphia Playhouse and "La Marie Vison" at La Mama Theater Club. His movie credits include "Crazy Joe" and "The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight."

> *"Although he often plays mini-villains, Herve refuses to accept roles that demean or mock midgets."*

Off stage, Herve's pasttime is photography. His work has been in *The New York Times, New York Post* and *Photo Cite Paris*. Between acting jobs, he is working on a photo book about midgets, a subject obviously close to his heart.

**DESPITE HIS OWN SUCCESS** in show business, Herve explains, it is not easy being a midget. He remembers all the times he auditioned for commercials and the directors said a midget advertising something like Alka-Seltzer would repulse viewers.

Then there are small humiliations. Like having to wait for another passenger to get in an elevator so they can push the buttons for him.

"It's not something I think about until other people make an uncomfortable scene," he pointed out, speaking as frankly about being 3-feet-11 inches as he does his acting. "Most people treat you like a baby, which can be very disgusting. They say 'Oh how cute and little you are!' which is insulting to a man who is 34 years old."

Rather than party with the Hollywood set ("most of those people are just trying to take advantage of everybody else"), Herve prefers the comfort of his home in Topanga Canyon, the company of musicians rather than actors, reading (Tennessee Williams, Norman Mailer, Sartre) and photography.

He sees his photo book project as a way of educating the public about midgets "or anyone with a handicap."

"I would like people to like me, but they are scared of me," he admits. "Sometimes they will come up to me in the Safeway or drugstore and say, 'Are you a movie star? I saw you in the movie and you were mean!'

"I understand why people might think that, but I wish you would tell them in your article that I'm not a monster, just a human being."

Okay. That's easy. Herve Villechaize is not a monster, just a human being. And a very interesting human being, at that.

July 1977

# Little people think big on communicating

By SANDRA McDONOUGH
of The Oregonian staff

Don't call them short-statured people — call them people who happen to be short in stature.

The difference between those two phrases is not just semantics, said Gerald Rasa, national president of Little People of America, Inc. Rather, it's evidence of the attitudes "average-sized" persons hold about men and women who are short in stature.

Rasa, a public information officer for a small college in Greenville, Pa., is in Portland this week for the 19th Annual Convention of the Little People of America Monday through Friday at the Hilton Hotel. Approximately 375 little people, commonly known as dwarfs, are expected to attend the conference, coming from throughout the United States.

Little People of America is not a politically oriented organization, Rasa said. There is no lobbying for the rights of little people, no marches on governmental centers, no loud public relations campaign.

"We deal totally with individuals in getting our point across," Rasa said. "We were practicing interpersonal communication and human development long before (President) Carter started talking about it."

One of the major goals of the organization is to show average-sized individuals that little people are normal people, despite their short stature. Gathering together at a convention brings little people to the attention of many people, Rasa said, which helps promote their cause.

"This is what we call our 52nd week," Rasa said about the convention. "For 51 weeks of the year we're regular work-a-day people. But for the 52nd week, we're little people who come together for a good time, to socialize and be with our friends."

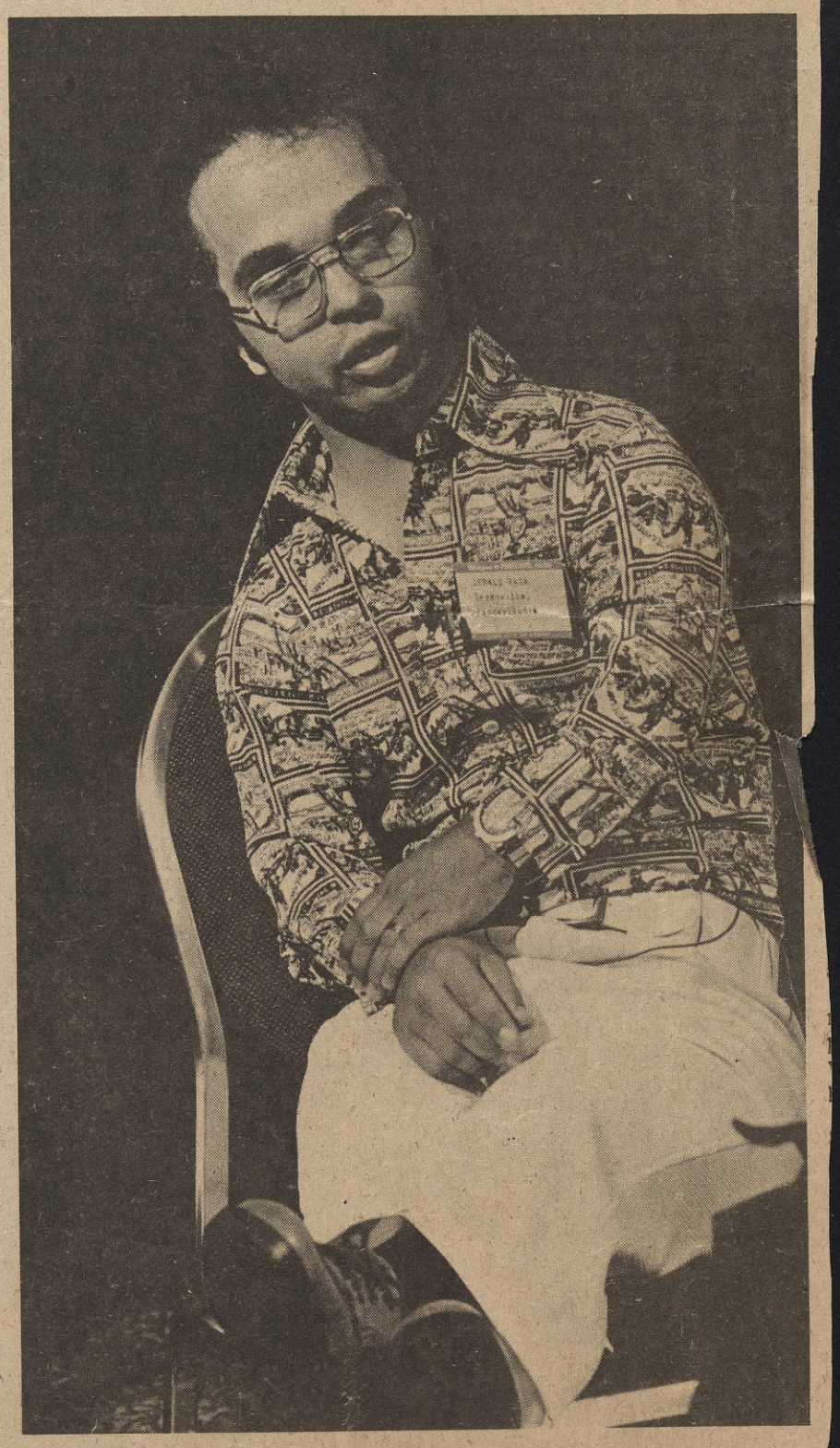
One of the major focuses of this year's conference is how parents can cope with having a "little" child. Rasa said he constantly is getting calls from parents who need to solve problems that range from finding a place where they can buy clothes for the children to coping with emotional problems their children may face because of their height.

The social stigma attached to dwarfism often makes it difficult for parents to deal with their child's stature. His organization tries to show parents that a little child is not a "blooming idiot or a freak."

"If I get a call from a woman who has a 6-year-old son who is little, I will put her in touch with another woman I know who has an 8-year-old son who is little and with a woman who has a 12-year-old son who is little and so on," Rasa said, adding that the best counseling comes from people that have shared the problems.

Rasa said he and his wife have a son who is small in stature. However, added Rasa, who is under five feet tall, he was the only "little'" person in his family.

The most common cause of dwarfism is achondroplasia — improper development of cartilage at ends of long bones — which is believed to be a primarily hereditary condition. However, there are about 60 known causes of dwarfism.



GERALD RASA

# Little People Join Forces

## *'It May Take Longer For Us To Solve The Problem'*

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — You're on the 14th floor, no one's around and you can't reach the elevator buttons. So you walk down.

You can't reach the coin slot or the buttons on a pay telephone. So you don't call.

The grocery item you want is on the top shelf, but you can't reach it. So you look for a clerk or go without.

It's not easy taking that first step to board a bus. Or dealing with store clerks over high counters.

If you haven't experienced at least one of those problems, chances are you're not one of the Little People of America, like Larry Carr and his wife, Mary.

"It's a tough road," Carr says of problems facing little people trying to cope in a world designed for big people.

"Only recently has there been any legislation or has anything been said to inform the public of the situation of the handicapped," added Carr, a Portland resident elected over the weekend as district president of the Little People of America.

The 2,000-member organization, founded by show business personality Bill Barty in 1957, is for people 4 feet 10 inches tall or smaller. It was formed to bring little people together socially and for discussion of mutual problems.

It was at a meeting of the organization in 1963 that Carr, a commercial sign painter, and his wife met.

Their short stature is caused by a condition called achondroplasia, the most common of 60 identified causes of dwarfism.

At the group's semiannual district meeting, members discussed exchange of information on how to cope with a world designed for taller people — a situation, they say, which causes both physical and psychological problems.

"It may take us longer to solve the problem, but we can," said Mrs. Carr, who said she uses stools to work in her kitchen, which is built for an average-size person.

Another problem, potentially, is the attitude of normal-size people toward little people in the job market.

Little people, if given a chance, can do many jobs just as well as normal-size persons, Carr said — "The person can often tailor his job to himself."

But many employers are reluctant to hire a short person merely because of his height, Carr said.

Treatment of little people by normal-size adults too often follows "one extreme or the other," he said. "You can be cuddled or you can be rejected.

"We would like to be more known as people."



LITTLE PEOPLE'S LEADER
. . . Larry Carr with wife, Mary



SOROPTIMIST SPEAKER–Mary Pimentel, president of Soroptimist International of Turlock and Alice McCoy, program chairman, chat with Bob Rood of Salinas who spoke to the club about "Dwarfism" at a recent luncheon in Divine Gardens. Rood discussed the genetic factors which produce small size and told about some of the problems encountered by "little people." The speaker was introduced by a personal friend, Kermit Lindblom. A retired professional photographer, he is treasurer of the Professional Photographers Association of California. —Journal Photo

1977

**Liberated** from their torturous, hand-riveted *Star Wars* wardrobe (left), Anthony Daniels (Threepio) and Kenny Baker (Artoo-Detoo) wheel in a sort of vertical tandem about London on Baker's bike. The film was shot from Tunisia to Guatemala, but half the cast was British.




TERENCE SPENCER

## "Droids" Anthony Daniels & Kenny Baker

The film's lovable comic-relief robots have been likened to every duo from Abbott & Costello to the protagonists of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The gold-plated Threepio, a well-meaning bumbler with an Edward Everett Horton persona and voice like Ray Bolger's, is played by Anthony Daniels, at 31 a failed solicitor and solid trouper with London's Young Vic and BBC soaps. The eloquently blinking, beeping computer hero Artoo-Detoo is 42-year-old, 3′ Kenny Baker, one half (vibes and harmonica) of a cabaret act called the Minitones (with Jack Purvis, trumpet, 4′2″, who also got a job in *Star Wars* as an insect-eating jawa). Baker, the son of two full-sized musicians, and his 4′ wife, Eileen, 30, have two normal children. "Hang on tight, R2," cautions the cowardly C-3PO in the flick. "You've got to come back. You wouldn't want my life to get boring, would you?" Both are assured of a comeback in the *Star Wars* sequel.

# 'R2D2' left out of 'Star Wars' success

y JOSEPH KAY

LONDON (UPI) — While other performers in "Star Wars" bask in acclaim, 3-foot-8 Kenny Baker waits for a glint of public recognition.

"I haven't had much recognition in the States. Nobody knows me," admits Baker, an Englishman who delights audiences as robot R2-D2 in the film.

"The American stars have cashed in on the film. When it comes to this country Dec. 27, I hope C3PO (an android in the film) and myself will get recognition as actors," said Baker, described as "the smallest man in England."

The 43-year-old entertainer, who says there is "prejudice in this country about little people," gained some recognition in a two-man vaudeville act called "The Minitones," which he and another "small person," Jack Purvis, created in 1962.

Although he says he never has regretted being small, he admits it has been a drawback to his career.

"Audiences think we're cashing in on our size," he said. "They don't see that I can play the harmonica and vibraphone and do jokes. If someone taller does the same things, they think he's clever.

"During our cabaret act, it takes 10 minutes for the audience to get used to seeing us. They say, 'Look, a little man. Look at his little hands and little feet. I wonder if he's married?'"

"That's natural. But it takes time for them to get used to us, and they're missing the first gags," Baker said with disappointment.

Baker has been performing since he left school at 16 and joined a comedy show called "Lester's Midget Review." After that he landed parts in theater productions, ice shows and talent shows. His most unusual part, though, was as the robot in "Star Wars."

"I don't know how I got the part," said Baker. "My agent knew someone small was needed for the part."

In the movie, about a fantasy battle between the evil Galactic Empire which controls the galaxy and rebel forces led by Carrie Fisher and Mark Hamill, Baker was cast as a small robot which must deliver secret information to the rebels.

The producers fitted a heavy vacuum-cleaner-like contraption around Baker, whose form is not seen in the movie.

"It was murder," Baker says, crouching spread-legged to imitate the straining posture he assumed. "I could only go a few yards and I'd get flaky."

For six months of filming, including three weeks in the Tunisian desert, Baker received $6,500.

"I should have asked for a percentage. Blimey, I'd be rich," Baker said. "I thought the movie was good, but I'm very surprised it is a smash success."

Baker's personal success from the movie has been less than smashing so far. One London newspaper featured a story about him. A U.S. television producer asked him to appear on a show in February. But that is the extent of it.

In fact, Baker recently received a letter from 20th Century-Fox, the film's distributor, asking him to pay for his tickets to the movie's premiere in London.

"I thought of sending it back," says Baker without malice. "That was mean."

Nonetheless, Baker remains an ardent "Star Wars" fan. He has "Star Wars" T-shirts, photographs, and a souvenir comic book. He proudly digs out a "Reader's Digest" article on the movie, and points out the film's theme song rose to No. 3 on British charts even before the movie's British debut.

He also is preoccupied with his family — wife Eileen, also small, and normal-sized Christopher, 6, and Kevin, 3 — and his entertainment career, which sometimes keeps him busy seven nights a week.

"I'm not doing badly, and I can live at home," he says. "I just want to be a successful double, to travel the world as an accepted double act."

And he looks forward to performing in the sequel to "Star Wars," tentatively scheduled to start filming next fall.

"I've been approached to play in the sequel, though nothing has been firmed up yet," he says. "I don't know if I'll play R2D2 again. But if they got someone else, they'd either have to remake R2 or find someone just as small."

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# New Treatment For Dwarfism

**Washington**

A compound for treating human dwarfism caused by pituitary insufficiency is the subject of a patent issued recently. The compound was developed by Drs. Martin Sonenberg and Nobuyuki Yamasaki, who did their research at the Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research in New York.

Basically, the new compound is a small part of a long chain of amino acids that make up the growth hormone found in cows (bovine growth hormone). The active fragment identified by the inventors consists of a chain of 38 amino acids. In limited tests with children suffering from growth retardation, the compound has been shown to have many of the metabolic effects of human growth hormone.

The compound may also be useful as a pituitary-generating agent in certain ulcer and liver conditions, and as a "booster" in treatment to speed the healing of wounds.

Because the substance also promotes growth in animals, additional uses are foreseen — perhaps in lifestock food supplements to increase the production of wool, meat and milk.

*New York Times*

San Jose Mercury, Wednesday morning, February 8, 1978 Section C

# Heightism makes the list of bad 'isms'

By Mary Knoblauch
Chicago Tribune

HEIGHTISM was added to the list of bad "isms" some years ago. It refers to the practice of discriminating against or otherwise insulting short people simply because they are petite. In fact, petite persons familiar with the term have been yelling "heightist" at songwriter Randy Newman simply because he cataloged their sins in a hit song called "Short People."

Everything Newman says is true, at least in the sense that it captures the insane jealousy directed toward short people by certain Americans who fall into what is best termed the "almost-tall" category. Newman is 5 feet 11 inches tall. Six feet tall is the minimum for the appellation "tall," if you are a male.

For the last century — until 1976 — Americans as a group were growing taller at the rate of just under half an inch a decade. Children at full growth began to look down at their parents, generation after generation. Now that trend seems to have halted in the country, according to the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

For the almost-tall, this is a mortal blow. The country is dividing into camps of short and tall, and they have no identity. On one hand, there are towering figures such as professional basketball player Artis Gilmore, who at 7 feet 2 inches might have to pick up Randy Newman to say hello. On the other hand are those people designated "short" (the numbers are different for men and women) who keep the country going by picking up those responsibilities that all people are unable to perform and almost-tall people will not deign to perform.

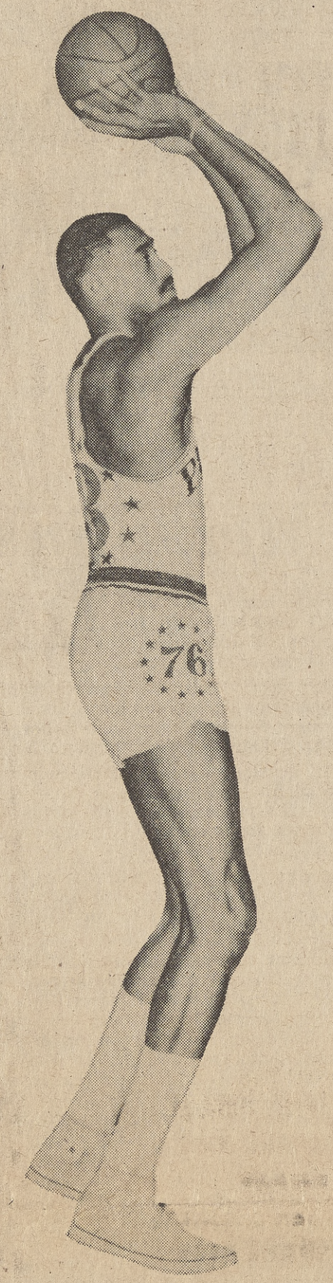
All Americans are born short; some simply have the misfortune to keep on growing. Those are the people who buy size 8 ice skates for their 5-feet-2-inch daughters because they refused to believe that the person has sensibly stopped growing at size 6.

Short people do have special privileges in life. They don't get punched out as much, no matter how obnoxious they might be, because it is considered uncouth for a taller person to hit someone who is considerably shorter. Even short people have had to face younger (and shorter) siblings who had penchants for kicking their older brothers or sisters.

Perhaps that is why short people and tall people have natural alliances. The problems they both suffer ("Hey, squirt" or "How's the weather up there?") require them to be polite to each other for fear of reprisals.

Their endless arguments over who has more problems buying clothes and furniture set them apart from the rest of the relatively statureless crowd, and tall people generally do acknowledge the worth of short people. Without short people, who would crawl over the seat belt anchors to sit in the back sets of tiny little cars "that go beep, beep, beep" and are designed for two adults and two very short preschool people? Who would ride racehorses professionally? What would the first commercial airlines have done without stewardesses who came in under 5 feet 3 inches, the maximum height allowed then?

To be fair to the almost-talls still quivering with hatred and sending copies of Newman's song to short friends and relatives, short people do have an annoying tendency toward aggression. For women aspiring to greater things in their jobs, aggression is the first and best weapon to stop that evil practice of the almost-tall, who seem compelled to pat short female managers on the head. For short men, aggression can become an addiction, because taller people excuse it as "compensation," and few almost-talls are foolish enough to pat short men on the headss unless they are of advanced years or under 12.



Wilt Chamberlain. . . *tall*



Mickey Rooney. . . *short*

# *Here's the tall and the short of it*

By Joan Jackson
Staff Writer

IF you had a choice, would you rather be tall? Or short?

The talls, it turns out, opt for taller. They are also entranced by a dominance hangup — looking down on the short world.

The shorts? They rather talk about the other advantages.

The survey into the lofty heights of San Jose was purely informal. And unscientific. But revealing. The questions were simple enough: would you choose to be tall or short; do you like tall or short men (or women).

"Tall" says a secretary who is 5-feet-10 ½. "You get more respect if you are tall. People look up to tall people. I like I think growing up is the hardest party. But once you reach maturity it is probably easier to accept your height."

"Tall. Absolutely!" says a tall shapely thing. "I'm tall anyway and these shoes (those big wedgie kind) make me 6-feet-1. And I love it. I love being way up there and looking down on people. If I had my choice, I'd want to be 6-feet-2." She perfers tall men, "But short men aren't bad, either," she concedes.

"Taller," says an Army officer.

"Growing tall saved my life. I was beat up regularly in school. When I grew at age 14 — wow! All of a sudden I was a 6-feet-1 menace. And people stopped trying to fight. Tall versus short women? I like them all."

"Tallest possible," says a basketball hopeful at 6-feet-4 ½. "I like looking down on all those other people. For a long time I was short and fat. Then, wham! I grew from 5-feet-8 to 6-feet-4 in two years." He's still growing, and his dream height is 6-feet-7 with a girl to match.

The shorties, meanwhile, laugh at all those beanpoles way up there breathing smog-filled atmosphere air and overlooking the close to earth things.

"Short," says a 5-feet-5 businessman. "It's easier to get around, easier to get along. I drive a Volkswagen bus so I can look down on people.I think 5-feet-7 would be a nice height. Do I like tall women or short women? Well, I wish either one would make me an offer."

"Shorter is not bad," says an Italian looking man with a Gigolo moustache. "I consider myself short." He is 5-feet-7. "And a-half," he adds standing up straighter. "I'd like to be 5-feet-10. Or even 6 feet. It would give me an advantage of dominance." As for women, "I like short women. A small woman. Bite size is enough."

"Shortness has an advantage," says a petite redhead, "because tall men like short women." She would still rather be tall.

The inbetweens — the not-quite talls and the not-quite shorts — voted unanimously to be "taller" ranging from a couple of inches to a full foot. "I'd love to be a foot taller," says a female reporter. "I'd love it if the editors had to look up to me."

# Newman hit, 'Short People,' grows some tall controversy

*(Editors note: Although her driver's license lists the author at 5 feet nothing, she likes to think of herself as 6-foot-1. She also loves Randy Newman's song, "Short People.")*

By Roberta G. Wax
United Press International

RANDY Newman's song "Short People" has grown some tall controversy. Reactions pro and con are heightened by mocking lines such as, "Short people got no reason to live" because "they got little baby legs that stand so low, you gotta pick 'em up just to say hello."

"Short People" is No. 2 on the Billboard record charts, Newman's first big hit as a singer.

Billy Barty, an actor and well-known small person who founded Little People of America, said the song doesn't bother him, but thinks Newman "goofed" when he wrote it.

"Yes, it's satire," the 3-foot-9 Barty said. "His (Newman) writing is weird anyway. But how many people would be disturbed because they didn't know it was satire? That's where the danger is."

Newman, who comes from a musical family and has a degree from UCLA in musical composition, showed his satirical touch earlier in tunes such as "Political Science," advocating bombing South America because "they stole our name" and "Sail Away" about the joys of slavery.

The talk in music circles is that "Short People" is an inside joke aimed at the powerful but pint-sized executives that abound in the record industry.

Newman, reached in New York, refused to comment.

However, after performing the song on the "Saturday Night Live" television show, Newman said he has taken a lot of abuse and "had little people throw eggs at me and I don't think I deserved it."

"I haven't commented on it until now but I wanted to respond in some way and I just wanted to say to all the people that are really offended . . . (and he made a raspberry noise)."

**'Short people got no reason to live because they got little baby legs that stand so low, you gotta pick 'em up just to say hello.'**

Another industry insider said "Short People" sprouted not long after Newman's backstage tiff with another singer — far short of tall — over deletion of a Newman number from a TV show.

Composer-singer Paul Williams, a towering 5 feet 2 who frequently makes short jokes about himself, sang "Short People" with Andy Williams in the pre-Super Bowl show.

He said he likes the song, but when asked for a comment said shortly: "It's too long."

Barty said "little people" — midgets and dwarves — who have accepted themselves will laugh with the song, but children may be hurt.

"I don't mind it, but I'm thinking of other people. I love the beat. There are only two lines that are outstanding — 'Short people are just the same as you and I; All men are brothers 'til the day they die'."

Actor Jerry Marin, formerly of the "Gong Show," and his wife, actress Elizabeth Barrington, both dislike the song, although Marin, 4 feet 3, is less vocal.

"It's a terrible song," Miss Barrington said. "I'm 4 foot 4 and I love being small. Good things come in small packages. I'd much rather be 4 feet 4 than 6 feet 4.

"I don't have to duck under doorways, I can sleep in any size bed."

Patty Maloney, a 3-foot-11 actress, thinks the song heightens awareness of short people.

"There is a lot of controversy and I think that is healthy. It's good that people react to it. I never think about being small. I wouldn't change any part of me.

"I understand what he meant," she said. "There is one line in the middle — short people are just the same as you and me — which to me is what he's trying to say, that a lot of people are biased against short, tall, blind, or deaf people and that all people should be treated as equals."

The controversy is felt the most at radio stations, some of which have drawn enough criticism to ban it.

"The negative calls came mostly from little kids who said their friends pick on them."

**By Nancy Frizzelle**

Hervé Villechaize, currently co-starring in *The One and Only* with Henry Winkler and in the new ABC series "Fantasy Island," looks particularly happy these days.

"I'm beginning to be recognized as an actor and not a circus act," says Villechaize, who stands 3-feet, 10-inches. "Finally, I'm overcoming the exploitation of screen writers who think a midget is not human, can't love, can't think—can only do tricks or sell newspapers on the street corner."

Over an early-morning espresso in the backyard of his tumbledown Hollywood house, Villechaize says that the struggle to be treated "just like anyone else" has taken most of his 34 years. He was born into a prominent French family on Shakespeare's birthday—April 23—during World War II. While his father, a surgeon, was fighting in the Resistance, his mother took refuge at a friend's farm in the south of France.

"One night while she was pregnant with me she was caught in a huge thunderstorm. She was trying to get the cow back to the farm after he had run away. Shortly afterwards, I was born. I guess the hardships of the war caused me to be the way I am; there had never been any midgets in our family before."

When he was 11, his parents took him out of the local school and sent him to art school in Paris. "I was a troublemaker and didn't get along with many people," Villechaize remembers.

"When I was 21, they said, 'In America you will have more opportunity' because French people think America is the land of gold. They sent me to New York City all by myself, speaking no English, but I did have a sponsor and two scholarships to the Art Students League of New York.

"I didn't see my parents for about five or six years. I would get maybe two letters a year. It was hard because I didn't know a word of English."

But somehow Villechaize learned to survive. His Chagall-like watercolors and paintings began selling in local art galleries. In 1963, while looking for an apartment in Greenwich Village, he was invited by a tenant to come back the next morning and appear in what was to be his first movie. The film was called *Chappaqua*. Villechaize played Little Caesar.

Soon after, he married Anne, a 5-foot, 4-inch fellow student at the Art Students League (they are now separated). Villechaize sold paintings now and then, pantomimed with the New York City Opera for $10 a night, and appeared from time to time in plays at the Cafe La Mama Theater.

*(continued)*



**Donald Davidson** (Houston Astros)
Guest Columnist

# Size no handicap for success

WHEN I was 5 years old, I contracted a rare form of sleeping sickness. Doctors told me I was going to be a dwarf the rest of my life. I only grew to be 48 inches high.

So it's natural that people ask me, "Has your size handicapped you?" Well, I think the best way to measure a handicap is whether it prevents you from accomplishing anything. And my size hasn't kept me from leading a wonderful life in baseball.

I'll admit when hotel managers assign me a room on the 26th floor and I can't reach the elevator button, I get a bit teed off. But that's part of the fun, and I'll bet I've had more fun than most normal-sized folks in my 53 years. I want to share some of my experiences today.

I always wanted to be involved in baseball, except for a brief time when I thought about becoming a jockey. My father had a small interest in a stable and had a good horse. My size was ideal, needless to say, and I have strong forearms because I exercise often. So my father put me on the horse to try me out. I fell off while the horse was standing still. End of my jockey ambitions.

I was an active participant in sports as a youth. I played football with kids my age when I was 15. I often got knocked out and I got a broken hip once. I was a second baseman in baseball. And I was a goaltender in hockey. Hockey was my best sport because I was a good skater. At age 19 I joined the Roller Vanities, which is similar to the Ice Follies except it's roller skating. I traveled everywhere, including Houston where we played the old Auditorium. I was a feature performer and my first big act was "Me and My Shadow." I was the shadow.

I almost participated in a major league baseball game too. The year was 1938. I was a bat boy, clubhouse boy and errand boy for both the Boston Braves and the Boston Red Sox, and this day the Red Sox were playing the Yankees, who already had clinched the pennant. We had a catcher named Moe Berg, who, when he wasn't hitting, used to do my French and Latin translations in the bullpen (I got straight A's in French and Latin). Joe Cronin, our manager, sent me up to pinch hit for Berg. My mother and father were in the stands and I was excited. Bill Summers was the umpire and I walked to the plate carrying a fungo stick and said, "Mr. Summers, Mr. Cronin told me to bat for Mr. Berg."

Summers jerked off his mask and bellowed, "Get you butt back to the dugout. Nobody is gonna make a farce of a game I umpire."

But I did make one appearance for the Red Sox in an exhibition game at Brockton, Mass., against the Taunton Lumber Company. I was a pinch runner and I scored. Then I batted and walked. I was tough to pitch to because of my strike zone.

My size probably helped me to get started in baseball. I used to belong to what was called the Knothole Gang in Boston. Youngsters would pay 10 cents dues each week and get to see a game Saturday afternoon. I'd sneak in from the bleachers to get some autographs at Braves Field, but I was so small I had a problem getting close to the players. Braves catcher Ray Mueller saw the situation and said. "Hey kid, you wanna come to the dugout for autographs?" I almost vaulted the fence. The Braves won that day, so Mueller asked, "Do you want to come back tomorrow?" I kept coming. Then I met the Red Sox people and became pitcher Lefty Grove's personal mascot.

Eventually, as I aged, I became a sportswriter. Then after my three years with the Roller Vanities, I was offered a part-time job with the Braves, who needed extra office help in 1948. That part-time job lasted 28 years. I was with the Braves in Boston, Milwaukee and Atlanta. I never dreamed my career wouldn't end with the Braves. In my first will, I even asked that I be cremated and my ashes scattered around Milwaukee's County Stadium. I've changed that will.

Oh, the experiences I enjoyed as publicity director and traveling secretary for the Braves. I recounted many in my book "Caught Short," published five years ago.

Back in Milwaukee's great years, 1954-1959, we had three guys — Warren Spahn, Lew Burdette and Eddie Mathews — who not only were great players but who never stopped playing jokes on me. Once we were taking a team picture and Spahn and Mathews grabbed me and took my pants off. The gates had just opened and I was hopping mad. Spahn was pitching that day against the Cubs. He was never one to spend a lot of money on clothes but he had just bought a new suit. So while he was on the mound, I put the new suit in the shower, then in the dryer. I hung it by his locker. Later he was answering reporters' questions as he dressed and when he put his pants on, the cuffs came up to his knees. Did he yell! By then I had locked myself in the manager's office.

John Quinn, the late Braves and Phillies executive, gave me my chance in baseball and was one of my dearest friends. John Mullen, now the Astros' assistant general manager, is another longtime friend from those early days with the Braves. But even they used to enjoy giving me a tough time. I remember once when we made a speaking tour stop at Eau Claire, Wis., where we operated a farm club. After a banquet, I stepped out of a car to see how deep the snow was and to my horror I discovered it was more than four feet deep. I heard one voice — probably Mullen's — saying, "Let him sink." But of course, Quinn and Mullen saved me.

I'm a fun-loving guy, so I'm used to being kidded. But at the 1968 All-Star game in Houston, I really felt sorry for a doorman at our hotel. He was about my size and with his back turned, it was easy to mistake him for me. Fred Haney, a former Milwaukee manager, was so sure it was me that he kicked the little guy in the butt, saying, "Who are you trying to fool, you little S.O.B?" Buzzie Bavasi, now with California, slapped him on the back and called him a few friendly names. This went on all night. When I arrived, the dwarf called me aside and said, "How do you stand this? I don't have anything against you, but I'll be happy to see you get the hell out of Houston."

Some of my greatest and not-so-greatest moments have come in hotels. I'm a feisty sort, so they tell me, and I'm sure most hotel managers agree. As Braves traveling seecretary, I moved my teams out of hotels 25 times. We checked into one hotel in Tampa, where we were to play several exhibition games, and a big convention group had taken over. Mack Jones, one of our players, found a banquet table in his room but no bed.

"Where is he supposed to sleep?" I asked the clerk.

"Well sir, if we can't find him a bed, he sleeps on the banquet table," came the reply. Joe Torre, another player, lifted me up under the arms and the clerk and I went jaw to jaw while Torre and others yelled, "Give 'em hell, Donald."

I guess I did. Our whole team, carrying bags in hand, ended up marching down the street in search of another hotel.

"Where do we throw the keys?" someone asked. "In the street," I replied.

Among my most challenging assignments was the one at Atlanta when Henry Aaron was chasing Babe Ruth's home run record. The media was constantly after Henry for interviews. And sadly, there were threats on his life, especially in the Northeast. So we put him in hotel suites under fictitious names. And I screened all calls. My phone started ringing at 5 or 6 each morning. Lots of people claimed they had baseballs autographed by the Babe and they wanted Aaron's signature, too. Well, I know Babe's autograph as a Boston player and a Brooklyn coach. I have an autographed picture of him in my Houston office. People sometimes were crushed when I told them their Babe Ruth autograph wasn't legitimate.

As Aaron neared Ruth's record, we started collecting all the home run baseballs. When he hit No. 690, 20 fans brought the "home run ball" to us. So we began putting ulta-ray on the baseballs, like you do on your hands when you stamp them. We had a code and changed figures each day. We had to establish a numbering system and count foul balls hit into the stands. Everytime Aaron came to bat, the umpire would get a new dozen balls, our coded balls. The balls still kept pouring in, but all we had to do was shine a light on them to find the one Aaron had hit out of the park.

Leaving the Braves was a sad experience, but I'm grateful to Tal Smith and Sidney Schlenker for offering me a job here. I love Houston. But even departing Atlanta had one humorous aspect. Because the type dwarf I am is rare and because my wife has an unusual blood disease, we had willed our bodies to Emory University in Atlanta. When I moved to Houston I got a phone call from Emory officials saying, "We're sorry you were fired by the Braves, glad you got a job with Houston and because of the shipping expense, we suggest you make other arrangements for your bodies."

Shipping expense? Heck, they could ship me in a matchbox. Anyway, we made new arrangements with Baylor Medical School here.

I've been so fortunate. I've known Presidents Kennedy, Nixon, Ford and Carter. I've spent fun-filled evenings with Jimmy Durante and Milton Berle and other entertainers. I've walked golf courses with close friend Lee Trevino. And I've even seen a triple play started when a line drive bounced off the third baseman's head into the shortstop's glove.

My main satisfaction, however, is if whatever success I've achieved is an example to others who don't grow up normal. I tell youngsters that men aren't measured in feet and inches. They're measured in brains, ability and friends.

I once met a 10-year-old boy named Paul Miller who was a dwarf. I helped set up an autograph session with Braves players for Paul and his friends, and they had a ball. Soon afterward, I received a letter from Paul's father which ended, "You have made all the boys feel 10 feet tall."

Handicap? What handicap?

problems.



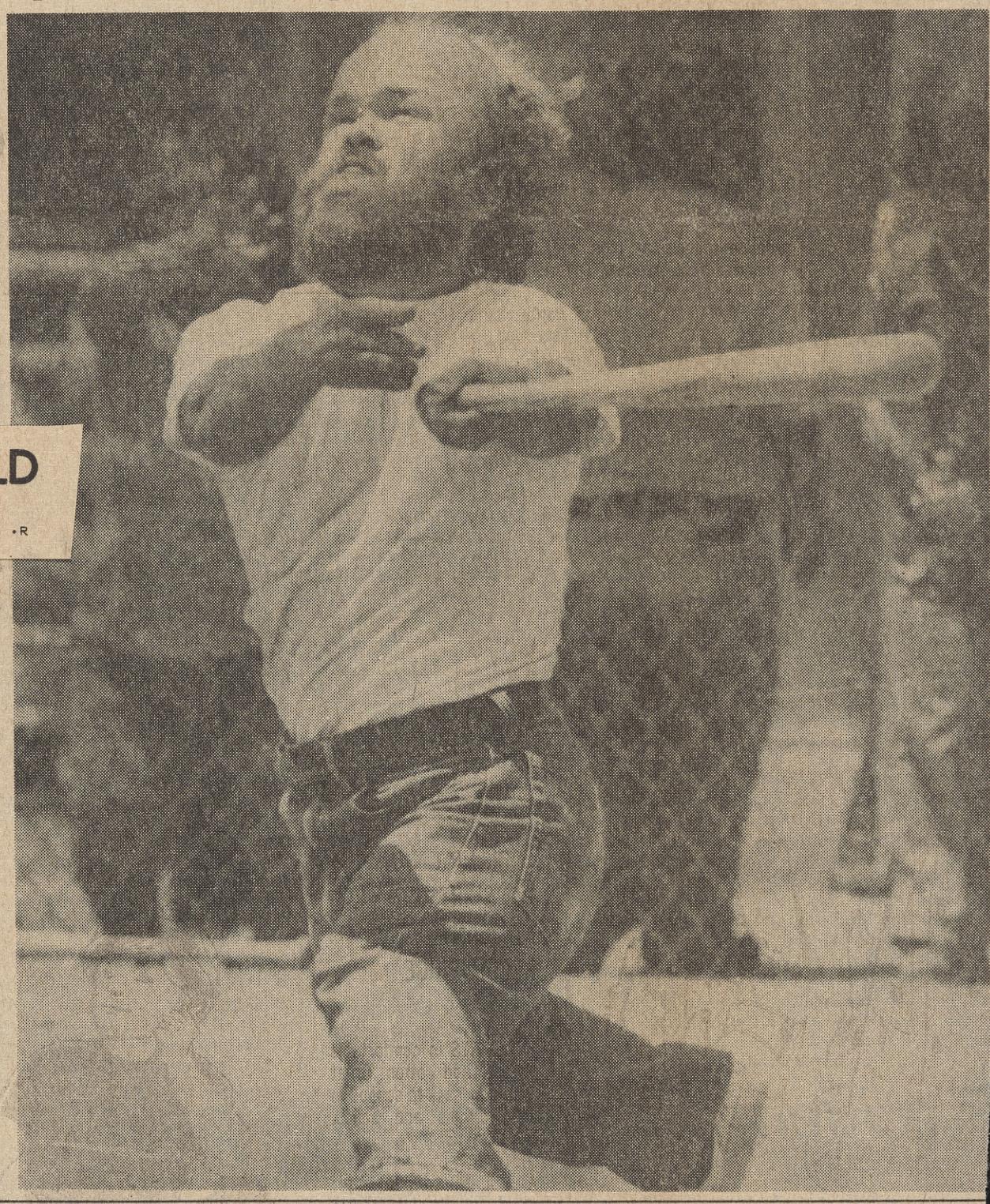
# Little people's day at the ballpark

The Little People Association National Convention took to the ball field in Irving Tuesday, with teams competing for the convention championship. In the top photo, the women participated in their own contest between the East and West. A member of the East team (bottom photo) cracks one to the outfield. Burre Billingsley decided to take photographs of the game instead of participating. More than 100 persons are attending the convention, based at the Le Baron Hotel. The convention continues through Thursday with a bowling tournament, talent show and banquet. A workshop on special problems for little people also will be held Thursday at

DALLAS TIMES HERALD

Wednesday, July 26, 1978 · · · · ·R





DALLAS TIMES HERALD
Thursday, July 27, 1978

# LIVING



## Enthusiasm is big for little ones

BY MARCIA SMITH-DURK
Staff Writer

The singers, dancers and comedians on stage at the Le Baron Hotel Wednesday night may have been short of stature, but in no way were they short of enthusiasm as they entertained some 500 conventioneers who applauded the performers' efforts all the way.

The annual talent show, performed by and for those attending the Little People of America convention, featured 24 performers, none of whom were more than 4 feet 10 inches tall. And though the acts were uneven in quality — as both amateurs and professionals alike appeared on the stage — the audience responded with equal fervor.

"The talent show is an opportunity for the little people to break out of their shells. They can get up there and perform and get laughed at (by other little people) and feel as though they are on equal ground," said Lee Kitchens, convention chairman and former president of LPA.

LPA, a national club for little people, or dwarfs, is open to people who are less than 4 feet 10 inches tall. The club, founded by actor Billy Barty, was formed to give little people an opportunity to meet other little people in the country. The club's motto is Think Big!

The 20th annual convention of LPA (the first in Dallas) is the largest ever, Kitchens said. Approximately 533 people from 37 states, Canada and El Salvador were registered for the six-day convention. The little people attending the convention ranged in age from nine months to 80 years, and in size, from 34 inches to 4 feet 10 inches.

The talent show was one of many events scheduled for the entertainment and edification of the little people: sporting events, workshops, dances, din-

See SHORT on Page 8



Staff Photo by Meg McKinney

*Carol Phillips discos at the Little People Convention while a Snoopy pinata hangs in background and the 'little littles' watch attentively*



## Short People 'think big' at their convention

Continued from Page One

ners, a fashion show and general assemblies were also on the agenda.

At least 500 people (including both little people and their families) crowded into the Parliament Room at the Le Baron to see the Wednesday night show. Like any convention, there was a lot of reminiscing about past conventions, picture-taking and greeting of old friends and new before the performers took the stage.

The show opened with a young woman who disco-ed to the BeeGee's "More Than A Woman" from "Saturday Night Fever." Several musical acts followed. The songs all seemed to have special significance to the people performing them, whether the song was "Thank You for Being a Friend" or "I'm Little But I'm Loud."

A middle-aged couple, both little, demonstrated the crowd's ability to laugh at their size. "We're ankle deep in little littles tonight", brought a big laugh from the crowd. Another act featured the song "Hello Biggie," an answer to Randy Newman's "Short People."

To the tune of "Hello, Dolly," they sang:

*"Well hello, biggie.*
*"We hope you bump your head*
*"Walking through the door."*

Most of the little people in LPA were able to accept Randy Newman's hit song "Short People" with good humor, Kitchens said. "The ones that reacted most strongly to the song were about 5 feet tall. We little people took the time to listen to the words and realize they were talking about small-minded people," he said.

That didn't keep the conventioneers from enjoying "Hello Biggie," "Tall People" and any barbs aimed at the Newman hit.

One of the stars of the show, Michael Lee Gogin, a professional musician from Los Angeles who will appear in the movie "The Lord of the Rings," which also features Billy Barty, was particularly incensed by "Short People."

"Musically, the song's not that good. And I don't care what the writer's intentions were, the song clearly pointed to the physical. It's stupid. And it's dumb of the record company to want to play off that and hurt people," he said.

Yet, Gogin said the song wasn't a big issue at this year's convention. "It hasn't been a topic of conversation, thank God. It's been swept under the carpet."

# Small agency with big objective

By Tom Tiede

TRUE or false? Whenever the federal government becomes involved in a societal matter it spends enormous amounts of money to create an overweight bureaucracy which takes forever to do very little at all. If you answer true, you are likely among the melancholy majority of citizens.

But the real answer is: false. Because there is at least one federal program in progress that, honest, is cheap, modest and effective. It's the understated effort of the obscure National Pituitary Agency; what it does, and well, is make it financially possible for some stunted American kids to grow up.

The agency regulates the administration of growth hormones to youngsters whose bodies lack them. Untreated, these kids become "hypopituitary dwarfs," never more than five feet tall, and suffer life-long consequences. Given NPA hormones, however, the children can be stimulated to grow to nearly normal stature.

To be sure, this stimulation can be provided without the National Pituitary Agency. But at a heavy individual price. The private administration of growth hormones now costs at least $3,000 per year per patient; in contrast, NPA has provided the hormones free to more than 6,000 short people across the nation.

Not all small folks can be helped with the hormones. Most of them are the products of bone disease or heredity, and, in those cases, growth protein is useless. That leaves only the hypopituitary, or about 5 percent of the nation's 500,000 dwarfs; their young are the primary candidates for NPA's magic potion.

The potion, of course, comes from the pituitary gland, that capsule of wonders situated at the base of the human brain. The gland secretes 10 hormones known to regulate a variety of developmental processes, the most important of which, perhaps, is that which turns 20-inch infants into 6-foot teen-agers.

The awesome properties of the growth hormone were discovered in the 1950s. And the NPA was formed soon after (1963). Someone had to collect pituitaries, to milk the growth element, so Washington began funding an agency formed by the University of Maryland. To date, the cost has never been more than $500,000 a year.

It's no wonder the program costs so little. The NPA employs a scant 10 people, and houses them in a cluttered "suite" above Baltimore's Trailways bus depot. No glass and steel luxury for this bureaucracy; NPA's director, Dr. Salvatore Raiti, says the agency pays a most judicious rent: $3.50 a square yard.

There is no reception room at NPA, nor a receptionist either. The furnishings are early gauche, the walls need painting, and periodically one of the neighborhood winos bangs on the door for attention. Carpets? Leisure space? There is none of it. "Actually," sighs one staffer, "we can hardly afford coffee breaks."

As for productivity, however, the agency is well endowed. The staff keeps in touch with hospitals and morgues throughout the nation, and buys used pituitaries at $2 apiece. The glands are cut from cadavers during autopsies, or when the deceased permits, and NPA collects them for purpose of benevolent recycling.

The glands are kept in ordinary glass jars, in a backroom freezer. They look like a collection of red and gray marbles. NPA freights the pituitaries to California, where the growth hormone is extracted, and a Cleveland company puts the potion in vials for eventual posting to hospitals and medical schools.

The hormone is given thrice weekly to recipients, and the results are usually dramatic. Dr. Raiti says it's common for a patient who has been growing at less than one-half inch a year to sprout four-to-six inches in the first 12 months of treatment. Vital sexual characteristics develop just as rapidly.

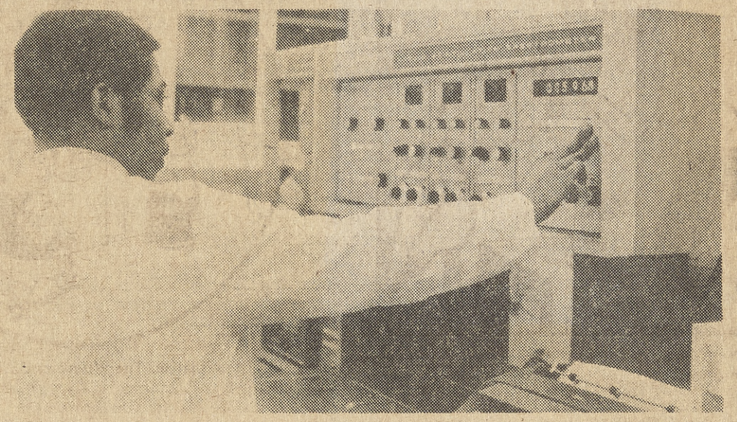
Raiti says the hormone is a psychological as well as physical blessing. Many hypopituitary dwarfs suffer from "infantilism," a persistence of childish characteristics. Hence, with hormone therapy, 18-year-old "babies," who previously spent their time with toys, can suddenly evolve into mature and confident young people.

The only limitation of the hormone may be that NPA cannot get enough of it. Three-quarters of a million Americans die annually, but most choose to be buried with their pituitaries intact. Only 60,000 glands are saved each year, hence NPA is forced to ration, and cut off supply when patients reach 5 feet 4 inches in height.

Dr. Raiti says the rationing is a shame that is, albeit, temporary. He believes the growth hormone will soon be synthesized in the laboratory. If that happens, the potion would become unlimited, doctors could receive it anywhere, and most young hypopituitary dwarfs could be stimulated to the full adult size.

By the way, the National Pituitary Agency is cooperating in the search for a synthetic pituitary. And it figures, for here is the ultimately proper government program. When a synthetic growth hormone is found, the need for NPA's collection effort will cease; this is one agency that's helping in its own termination.

*Tom Tiede writes for the Newspaper Enterprise Association*



National Pituitary Ageny costs taxpayers almost nothing

## Giving kids a boost

*Until a synthetic growth hormone is created, the National Pituitary Agency says every pituitary is needed. The age of the donor, the duration of time since death, and the cause of death are immaterial.*

*Pathologists and hospital officials may obtain shipping containers and further information from the NPA at 210 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, Md., 21201. The agency also supplies cards of bequest to prospective donors*

ACTOR AND ATHLETE

1976

# Billy Barty's Longtime Career

BY LEE GRANT
Times Staff Writer

Actor Billy Barty, 3 foot 9, a frustrated athlete, once played semipro baseball and batted .500 ("I went 1 for 2 and walked 43 times," he recalled).

He also played basketball in an alumni game at Cal State L.A., dribbling the ball through the legs of and confounding the school's then coach, Bill Sharman, and scoring 16 points. A sportswriter noted that he got fouled a lot. "I looked like a loose ball," said Barty.

Then there was football at Los Angeles City College where, it was reported, he became famous for throwing "the 15-yard bomb."

Barty, 52, veteran of 140 motion pictures, vaudeville, radio and television, always wanted to be a coach, a sportswriter or a sportscaster, Instead, he became a popular and respected actor, a man whose talent transcends his size.

Pauline Kael, the cinematic voice of the New Yorker, suggested Barty's performance in "The Day of the Locust" was Academy Award-worthy. He received similar notices for his role opposite Rod Steiger in "W.C. Fields and Me."

The other afternoon, Barty was working on location in a room at the venerable Queen of Angels Hospital for a movie called "Foul Play," which stars Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase. It is due this summer from Paramount Pictures.

**'I'm So Happy With Him'**

The director was Colin Higgins, the man who wrote the screenplay for "Harold and Maude" and "Silver Streak." This is his first directorial assignment. He had already formed an opinion on Barty. "Billy's a great talent, a terrific one," said Higgins. "I'm so happy with him. I wrote this role and knew right away there was no one in the world who could do it like him. He's a giant in his field, so to speak."

Added Miss Hawn, a friendly and popular presence on the set, "I once worked with Billy on Laugh-In and always liked him and appreciated him. He goes beyond being an oddity. He's gifted and honest."

In "Foul Play," Barty assumes the role of an unsuccessful and much abused door-to-door Bible salesman. Miss Hawn is a mild-mannered librarian who gets involved in a murder. She is told by policeman Chevy Chase to watch out for a dwarf who may be trying to kill her. By chance, Barty rings her doorbell while making his rounds and the frightened Miss Hawn forces him out a window from which he falls, rolls down the street and is struck by a car.

The scene this day found Barty wrapped head to foot in bandages, gauze and a cast, various limbs in traction.

It is a brief role, just this side of a cameo, and Barty was playing it all stops out. When Miss Hawn, realizing her error, comes to visit him in the hospital, Barty tells her, "You don't have to apologize." Then as she leaves, he waves goodby to her with the arm hanging in traction, the squeak of the pully echoing down the hall.

The scene done, Higgins called a recess for lunch and Barty put on a robe over his hospital gown and strolled

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# BILLY BARTY

Continued from First Page

outside to the catering truck in the cold. He is a gregarious man, acknowledging the hospital's real patients who recognize him.

Barty's lunch tray barely reached the truck's counter. "This is why I don't eat in cafeterias," he said. "I can't see the food before I pay for it."

Six years ago, Barty had heart surgery and now he keeps to a low-sodium, salt-free diet.

There is not much mention of physical size during the conversation with Barty. He talks instead of movies and memories, projects upcoming and sports ("I could coach the Rams. If Carroll Rosenbloom wants to call me, I won't even charge him").

He is a busy man, concurrently acting in United Artists' and Ralph Bakshi's screen version of "Lord of the Rings" and appearing regularly on TV's Redd Foxx Show.

Added to that, "I just got off 46 one-nighters with Donald O'Connor," he said. "I love the live audience." On stage, Barty's act includes a little singing, a little dancing, a little trumpet playing and impersonations ranging from Liberace and Jimmy Durante to Peter Lorre and Louis Armstrong.

Barty vividly remembers the old days, the days as a child actor that go back to 1928 when he made "Wedded Blisters" for the early Vitaphone Studios, "my first two-reeler," he said.

**Featurettes With Rooney**

Then came a number of "Mickey McGuire" featurettes with Mickey Rooney and such films as "Footlight Parade," "Alice in Wonderland," "Roman Scandals," "Nothing Sacred" and "Gold Diggers of 1933."

"My mom kept a roster and scrapbook of everything I did," he said. That also included some of the first local TV shows in the late '40s emanating here from KTLA and KHJ.

Although he had done mainly musicals and comedy, director John Schlesinger cast Barty for a dramatic role in "Day of the Locust." The performance—highlighted by a riveting scene at a cock fight—surprised even his friends. "There were lots of nice compliments," said Barty, but there was no Oscar nomination.

"I even took an ad out in the trade papers," he said. "I'll admit I was disappointed—if the picture had been a big success, perhaps it might have happened." (Burgess Meredith received a nomination for his supporting role in the film.)

**Dramatic Role**

Barty also points with pride to a dramatic role he played in a 1957 Alfred Hitchcock TV show called "The Glass Eye," which costarred Jessica Tandy. It was about a ventriloquist and a dummy. In typical Hitchcock fashion, the ventriloquist turned out to be the dummy and the dummy turned out to be the ventriloquist.

Barty prefers dramatic roles but finds few written for little people, as he calls those his size. He hopes to break that barrier with an idea for his own TV show. The title is "A Question of Rights" and in it Barty would play a lawyer. He has already written the pilot.

Randy Newman's satirical hit song, "Short People," has been causing controversy and Barty was ready for a question about it. "I think it stinks," he said. "Actually for me it's OK, I love satire. But there are little people who are uptight about their size and it might affect them, kids who are having a tough time coming to grips with it. That's the only reason I object. In my act, I make fun of myself."

Barty is a founder of an organization called Little People of America that meets annually in convention for "social, psychological, medical and research reasons," he said.

It was at such an event that Barty met his wife, Shirley. They've been married 16 years and have two children, a daughter, Lori Ellen, 15, a little person, and a son, Braden, 7, "who's going to be big," said Barty.

# Texas Meeting Sparks Love

BY MARILYN DILLON
Enquirer Reporter

Sue and George expect their marriage will be much like any other.

"We'll run into problems but we'll work it out," says George Rossitto as he glances at his fiance, Sue Wallingford.

But any problems they do have will not be because of their size.

Sue and George met last July at the Little People of America convention in Dallas, Texas.

Sitting on the porch of the Wallingford home in Mack, Sue explains that it was the proverbial "love at first sight."

"WE MET each other at poolside on Wednesday morning and just started seeing each other," George, of Burbank, Calif., explains. "We left the convention and kept communicating."

The long-distance relationship—California to Mack phone calls and visits when possible—blossomed. Their wedding is to be held Saturday.

For Sue, the convention in Dallas was the first time she had been with a large group of little people. "I'd never even met another little person until I was nine," she explains.

"Cincinnati is such a conservative city," says Sue. "The biggest thing (problem) is probably meeting people like ourselves."

She complained that only about eight people turn out for the meetings of the Cincinnati chapter of the Little People of America. "Guys won't come out at all," she adds.

**FOR GEORGE**, it was not so difficult. A California native who now lives in Burbank and works on private jet fuel systems, George's parents also were little people and were among the founding members of Little People of America. He is an active member of the organization and has attended nine of their conventions.

"There's a lot more that are out there (Los Angeles)," he says. "These days, things are changing. Society has grown up, opened up a lot."



Enquirer photo BY GERRY WOLTER

TRIP TO convention led to "love at first sight" for Sue Wallingford and George Rossitto.

"My father had it rough," he says. His father is Angelo Rossitto, an actor who's "been in the business 50 years."

George's father was going to become a lawyer, but had to drop out of college to support his parents, he says. While trying to make it in Hollywood, "he sold papers on Hollywood Boulevard."

**ALTHOUGH THERE** still is discrimination, people are not so quick to assume a little person is an actor or a circus clown, George says.

"I find more every day," he says of the advantages of being 4-foot-5. But some of those advantages can also be disadvantages, Sue adds.

At 3-foot-11, she has been in stores where people have asked her if she is helping "her mommy with the shopping," she says.

**SUE**, 22, and George, 24, will be wed at Our Lady of Visitation Church, just around the corner from the Wallingford home. About 250 people, including some of George's friends and family from the West Coast, are expected for the ceremony.

The bride will be wearing the silk wedding dress, altered a bit, her mother wore 35 years ago. Her engagement ring once belonged to George's grandmother.

George's home in Burbank is awaiting them, and Sue, a May graduate of the College of Mount St. Joseph, hopes to find a job as a commercial artist soon after they arrive.



MRS. GEORGE JOSEPH ROSSITTO
. . . the former Susan Theresa Wallingford

courtship held since last July when they met at the Little People of America Convention in Dallas, Texas.

The bridegroom's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Angelo Rossitto of Los Angeles, are among the founding members of Little People of America. George is an active member of the organization; it was Sue's first time to be with a large group of little people.

Given in marriage by her father, Donald R. Wallingford of Cincinnati, Ohio, the new Mrs. Rossitto wore her mother's off-white satin wedding gown. The 35-year-old floor length gown had a two-foot train and long sleeves. The bodice of the dress was covered with sheer white chiffon.

For a headpiece, the bride wore a wreath of orange blossoms and violets, which had been her mother's. A bouquet of white roses, purple violets and orange blossoms completed her ensemble.

Maid of Honor was Kate Michael of Cincinnati, Ohio and bridesmaids were Lauren Brafford of Brookville, Indiana and the bride's sister-in-law, Chris Wallingford of Cincinnati.

The attendants wore matching full length gowns made of mauve-colored Quiana with cape-style sleeves. They carried baskets filled with pink roses and violets.

Joseph Gieb of Los Angeles was best man and ushers were Paul, Greg and Don Wallingford, brothers of the bride.

For her daughter's wedding, Mrs. Wallingford selected a light blue street-length gown with cowl neckline and full sleeves gathered at the elbow.

The bridegroom's mother wore a short pastel print gown with long sleeves and a round neckline.

Both mothers wore corsages of white carnations.

Following the ceremony attended by over 200 guests, the reception was held at the bride's parents' farm.

Music during the ceremony was provided by Gene Johnson, who played guitar and sang "The Wedding Song," and "The Sabbath Player."

Photographs of the day's events were taken by Robb Paris Photographers.

The former Miss Wallingford attended Mount Saint Joseph College, where she earned a B. A. Degree in Art. She is named in "Who's Who" and is included on the National Dean's List.

Her husband is employed in Long Beach as a fuel engine mechanic and is Captain of the Hollywood Shorties team.

During a honeymoon trip to California, the couple stopped in Las Vegas and was toasted by comedian Don Rickles during one of his dinner shows.

The couple will reside in Burbank.

from "The Cincinnati Enquirer" Friday, June 22, 1979

Nov 18, 1978

# Buster Brown dies in Austin

By RICK SMITH
American-Statesman Staff

A tiny woman pushed a small, pale man down the hospital corridor in a wheelchair that dwarfed them both.

Another patient, recovering from a kidney operation, watched them closely.

"Say," he finally stopped the small woman and man.

"Aren't you Buster Brown?"

The sick old man grinned.

"I am," he smiled.

"I saw you walking that dog Tige down Washington Street in St. Louis in 1924," the man stammered.

"It was 1923," Clifton corrected.

As a young man, Austin native John Clifton toured North America 12 years for a shoe company with an ugly bulldog, chanting: "I'm Buster Brown. I live in a shoe. This is my dog Tige. He lives there, too."

Clifton, 89, the last survivor of a series of midgets who played the role of Buster Brown, died Wednesday in an Austin hospital after a long illness.

"Mr. Clifton was the second midget to play Buster Brown," his wife, Selecta Clifton, explained.

Clifton was portraying the young Dutch boy in 1923 when he met his 4-foot-tall, 65-pound future wife, an Illinois native, in Clovis, N.M.

"It was such an unlikely way to get together," Mrs. Clifton smiled. "God must have planned it."

They were married two years later and the 52-inch-tall, 80-pound man, then in his mid 30s, quit his job with the shoe company. The couple moved to Austin, his hometown, and opened Buster Brown's Sandwich Shop on the corner of 19th and Guadalupe and later a dry cleaning firm before going to work for government agencies.

"We worked at jobs any normal person would do," Mrs. Clifton said Friday in the couple's average-sized Austin home. The furnishings include just a few pieces of scaled-down furniture.

"The only problem with being small is that we had to work harder just to prove we were as capable as other people. We had to always prove ourselves," she said.

Clifton, as Buster Brown, would don a Lord Fauntleroy jacket, blond wig, red beret and knickers and, along with the trained bulldog, entertain as many as 1,000 children at a time in whistle-stop performances on store roofs and in theatres to promote Buster Brown shoes.

A typical show might have him telling jokes while Tige, who was trained by Clifton, would lounge by his side, wearing glasses and smoking a pipe.

Later, the dog would prowl through the crowd and locate a child not wearing Buster Brown shoes, untie the child's shoe laces and try to pry off the offending off-brand.

"Traveling was harder on Mr. Clifton's dogs than it was on him," Mrs. Clifton said. "He went through three Tiges."

Train travel for a midget wasn't without hazards, however.

Once a young mother mistook Clifton

See Buster, A10



Staff Photo by Lon Cooper

Mrs. Clifton with clippings about her husband's career as Buster Brown.

## Buster

From A1

for her missing 7-year-old and yanked the small man across a coach car, shaking him soundly and giving him a strong tongue-lashing before noticing she had the wrong person.

"She was shocked, to say the least," Mrs. Clifton laughed.

The pair captured the public eye years later when they had a midget daughter, a first in medical history.

"We're pituitary midgets and our smallness isn't hereditary," Mrs. Clifton explained.

But medical experts were even more amazed years later when Myrna, the Clifton's daughter, and her husband, Clarence Swenson, who played a little person in "The Wizard of Oz," had two midget children, as well as a normal-sized girl.

"Third generation midgets are unheard of," Mrs. Clifton nodded.

The whole 14-member clan, including four normal-sized great-grandchildren, was on hand last Christmas to help celebrate Clifton's birthday on Dec. 25.

Mrs. Clifton produced a picture showing her husband dressed, not in a Santa Claus outfit, but in his original Buster Brown costume.

"He saved it all those years," she said softly.

Clifton was grinning and surrounded by a horde of great-grandchildren.

Only Tige was missing.

THE TEXAS METHODIST DECEMBER 8, 1978

## Lee And Mary Kitchens Welcomed



Sunday morning we welcomed Lee and Mary Kitchens back into the Saint John Church Family. She grew up in the church and they were united in marriage here. He has been working for Texas Instruments in Dallas for years and has now been transferred to the Lubbock office.

Lee and Mary live at 25 Canyon View Drive, East, Route 2, Lake Ransom Canyon, Slaton, Texas 79364, 829-2180. They are transferring their membership from the Preston Hollow United Methodist Church in Dallas.



Twins John and Greg Rice, 27, Talk to Curious Onlookers at the Palm Beach Mall

# 2-Foot-10 With Big Ambitions

By BARBARA PUSCH
Post Staff Writer

John and Greg Rice of West Palm Beach are 27-year-old twins who have a personality trait not uncommon among dwarfs. They sincerely believe: "We are no different from anyone else," said John.

Yet they are different. Each stands 2-foot-10. John weighs 66 pounds, Greg, 65. They special order their clothes from Philadelphia and pay $50 per pair for shoes. They designed and had installed foot pedal extensions in their Cadillac Seville and cannot reach most parking meters in West Palm Beach. They have to work twice as hard as normal-sized people just to accomplish everyday tasks.

"Everything we do makes work for us," John said. "Everything is a major accomplishment," Greg added. "For us, going up stairs is like you taking three steps at a time."

In spite of it all, John and Greg are very funny fellows, positive thinkers who use their wit and intelligence to motivate others. They are different, but as with others born with an abnormality, John and Greg use what they term their "so-called" handicap to its best advantage, which is to say, to their best advantage.

They are successful real estate salesmen and businessmen who work as assistant managers with the Berg Agency in West Palm Beach. They give speeches around the country, usually positive-thinking, motivational talks to masses of people interested in fulfilling their potentials, or at least in reinforcing their dreams.

The twins have made occasional appearances on television and in movies — the "Donny and Marie Show," the "Tonight Show" — and filmed a segment with Jerry Lewis for his upcoming film, "Hardly Working." Recently, a film crew followed John and Greg around West Palm Beach for the fall premiere TV show of "Real People."

"Every time you get an opportunity to do something you've never done before you should do it. It broadens your scope," John said.

John and Greg parasail, race small boats, water ski and participate in a variety of other sports. "We'll do things most normal-sized people won't do," John said.

They share their philosophy with others in the speeches they make. "Greg and I want to go out and prove to everybody that it doesn't matter if you're 6 feet tall," John said. "You can become whatever you want to," Greg added.

John and Greg did not always think that way. "We never thought small but we used to think average," John said.

Then they met Glen Turner, a former Singer sewing machine super salesman with a harelip who in the late '60s began selling motivation to those who would buy, and in turn, sell the same through a Turner organization called "Dare To Be Great."

They began selling "distributorships" in Turner's motivational pyramid while in high school. In 1970, after their freshman year at Palm Beach Junior College, Turner recruited John and Greg as top echelon organizers for Turner Enterprises, the umbrella organization which encompassed Dare To Be Great and Koscot Interplanetary Inc., a cosmetics company.

"We were taken from just being kids and thrown into the big business world of a multinational company," John said.

They ran with the "jet set," he said, and traveled the world — Australia, Europe, Mexico, South America, Canada and the U.S. — motivating Turner's motivators.

"We would travel as many as 10,000 miles in one week," Greg said. "We had a schedule that would make Bob Hope proud," John added.

In 1972, John and Greg became part of the Turner family. They were provided the boathouse apartment next to Turner's own castle-like home on the Turner estate in Goldenrod, outside Orlando.

"He paid the bills and taxes but we had all the rights and privileges of ownership," John said.

Turner outfitted the Rice brothers in matching three piece suits and gave them a Cadillac to drive.

At the height of Turner's success, John and Greg found themselves in the spotlight due to Turner's controversial notoriety. Photographs of Turner, flanked by John and Greg, appeared in Time and Life magazines. The New York Times reported his publicity stunts, such as the time Turner, "flanked by twin midgets," one article read, leaped from Turner's Learjet before "crowds of cheering disciples."

The Turner empire fell in 1973 under scrutiny of the Federal Trade Commission.

Turner originally was taken to trial for felony mail fraud and conspiracy charges. In 1975 he was ordered to pay back $44 million to consumers for their investments in Turner's pyramid sales program.

Fourteen felony charges were dropped. Turner was fined $5,000 after pleading no contest to federal

Turn to RICE, C4

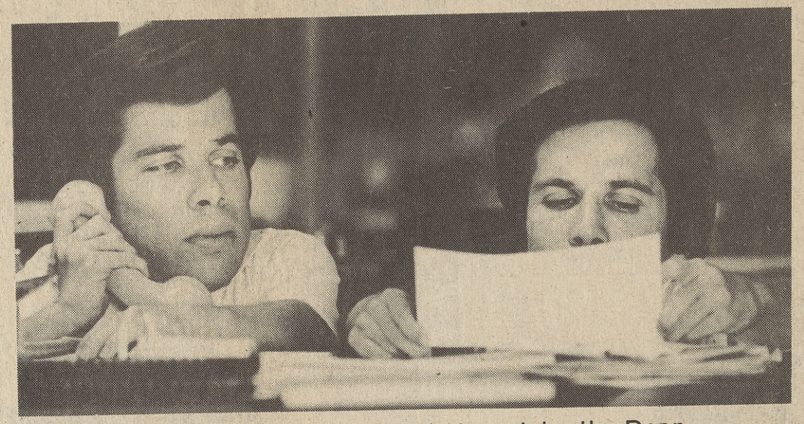


The Rice brothers' constant companion and closest friend is Dickie Johnson, who has known them since childhood. Many of the tasks they cannot perform, Johnson does it for them.

Staff Photos by Pat Partington




Filling His Cadillac Seville With Gas Is No Problem for John



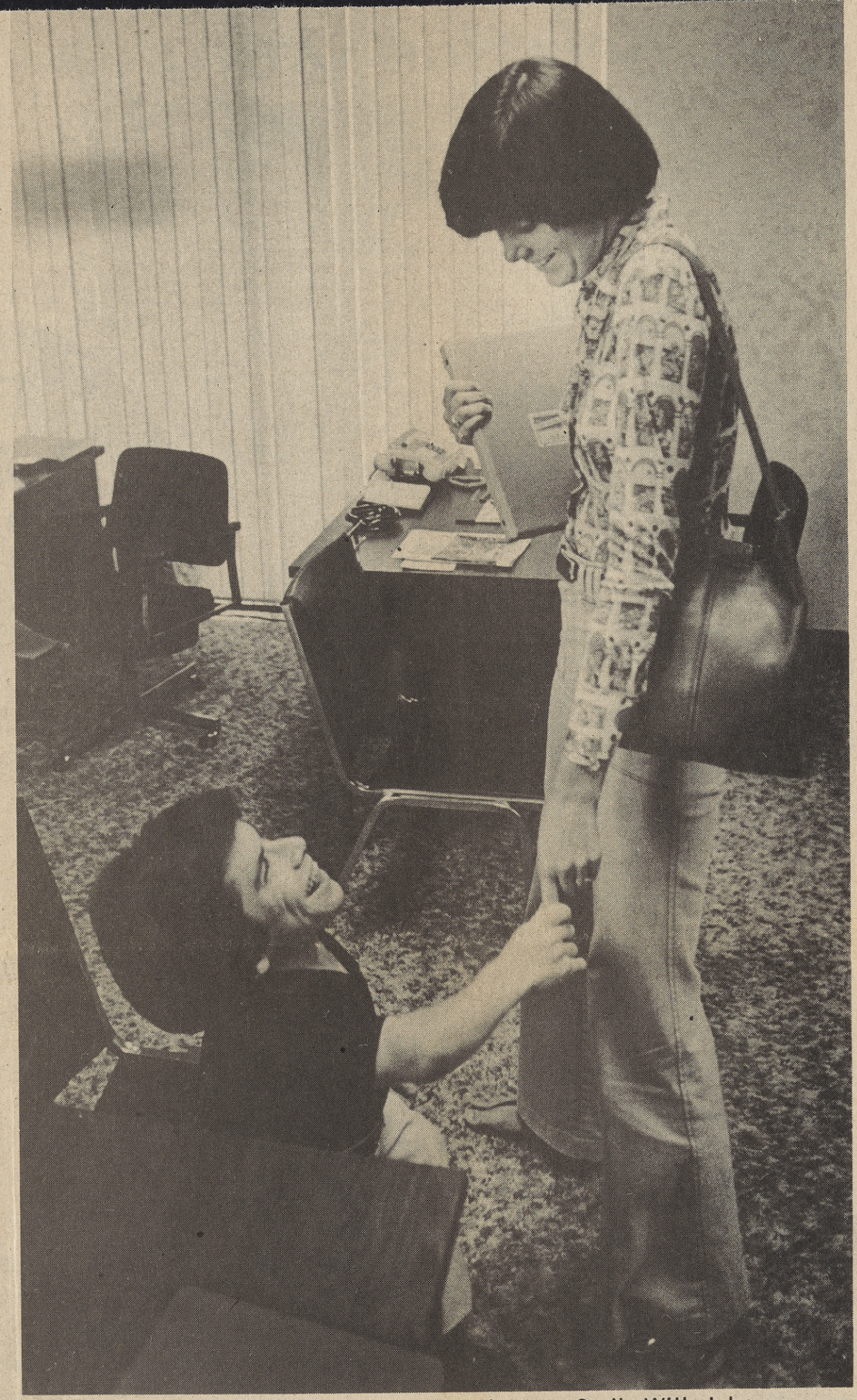
Greg (Left) Is the Word Man, John the Doer




Motivation in Real Estate Is Their Aim



John Gives a Speech on Success in Orlando



Berg Secretary Mary Counihan Shares a Smile With John

# The Rice Brothers

From C1

misdemeanor charges of violating the Securities and Exchange Commission regulations. In 1976 the IRS said Turner owed $1 million in back taxes. Turner's case remains under appeal.

John and Greg were audited due to their association with Turner. A $40,000 tax lien resulted for improper tax deductions. "We're still fighting it," John said.

The Rice brothers stayed with Turner through the lengthy court battle until 1976. Even though he borrowed huge sums of money from various individuals — as well as a yet unrepaid sum from Betty Kaylor, the twins' foster sister — Mrs. Kaylor says John and Greg remain staunch defenders of their mentor.

"Whether what he was doing was right or wrong or indifferent, he's taking people in their everyday existence and giving them some direction to do something with their lives," Greg said.

After leaving Turner in 1976 the Rice brothers spent six months in Atlanta working with Sid and Marty Krofft, creators of The World of Sid and Marty Krofft, a massive, $17 million, indoor, entertainment-oriented amusement park which went bust. John and Greg were billed as song and dance men. They then returned to West Palm Beach.

The Rice twins were born in St. Mary's Hospital in West Palm Beach to normal-sized parents who were in their early 20s. Unable to accept the twins, who were born not only as dwarfs but also with club feet, the parents abandoned the infants at the hospital. Members of the family were told the twins had died.

When John and Greg were 8 months old, they were placed in a foster home. Frank and Mildred Windsor of West Palm Beach, lower income working people now deceased, had two natural children and over the years took in some 12 foster children. John and Greg were the only two who remained a permanent part of the family.

"We had parents by choice, not by chance," John said.

During their early years, even the smallest of growth tasks was extremely difficult.

Mrs. Windsor recorded many of the twins' feats in a small red autograph book. Though both twins' feet had been surgically corrected shortly after birth, the twins wore metal braces designed to keep their feet in proper position.

When John and Greg became school age, the Windsors found no one — not public nor private nor religious schools — wanted the dwarfs. They were accepted at Royal Palm Elementary School for "exceptional children" — children with physical and mental abnormalities.

It was there, at Royal Palm, that the twins learned they were not so abnormal after all. The love and constant care of Mrs. Windsor kept them alive as infants. The realization that other children suffered greater handicaps than their own shortness of stature made them feel normal along side the severely handicapped.

"When you see people who aren't mobile, who can't see or hear, well, we drew a lot of strength from that," Greg said.

Though they felt normal among the children at Royal Palm, John and Greg still sensed their own irregularities. They waited until seventh grade before venturing out among the big kids.

The experience proved rewarding. They attended Golfview Junior High School where they learned to play coronets — specially made to suit their size — in the band. During the football season the twins were in the spotlight, featured musicians and mascots.

They went on to graduate in 1969 from Palm Beach High School, now Twin Lakes, and continued to play in the band there.

As the world around them grew, they stopped short and it has had its effect on interpersonal relationships.

"Everybody wanted to baby us when we were 12 and 13. Even now," Greg said. They would often find themselves being hoisted into the air in the arms of a well-meaning acquaintance.

The twins' one year at Palm Beach Junior College was relatively normal. They joined a fraternity, suffering along with fellow pledges the joys of brotherhood — road trips where they were left naked in the woods to fend for themselves, "purple passion" parties — the '60s answer to toga parties, being tarred and feathered and paddled.

Today John and Greg live with their foster sister, Mrs. Kaylor and her family on 5 acres left by the Windsors on the outskirts of West Palm Beach. Most of their time is spent in business pursuits. Their ultimate goal is to become rich.

"People like to see winners. They don't like losers. In the business world the only scorecard is the dollar — not home runs or touchdowns," John explained. "We are two of the most success-oriented people you will find."

Their determination to succeed is as much their own desire as it is a determination to prove Glenn Turner right.

The success principles which they learned from Turner have been applied to the real estate industry. They dress well and in matching outfits to enhance their business image. They drive a Cadillac Seville because to others, they said, it is a sign of success. And they always work as a team.

They are not, they said, in real estate "for a career in real estate per se," John said. They intend to become the motivational gurus of that particular industry.

Success is simple, they said. "Success is like taking a vacation. You have to make plans. You can't say you're going to be a millionaire. You have to know how you're going to make your million," Greg said.

Their personalities are like two sides to one person and the contrast works well. John is the more talkative, outgoing side of the team, Greg the more introverted, serious side. There is no competition between them.

"We've never had an argument," Greg said.

"A lot of brothers and sisters don't get along. We don't have that resentment of one doing better than the other," said John.

Prospective real estate clients find the duo fascinating. "People talk about everything but real estate," John said.

Continued on Next Page



The Twins as Clowns During 'Hardly Working' Filming; Director Jerry Lewis Is at Center Left



John Lends a Hand Dressing for a Date

Although they are too busy to develop personal relationships the brothers do like ladies — the taller the better. 'We don't date any small girls. Everything around us is normal size,' Greg explained. John said, 'I'm not looking to get married unless I find a real good deal.'

Staff Photos by Pat Partington



During a Visit to Orlando, the Brothers Disco Down at Park Place

The Palm Beach Post-Times
SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 1979
SECTION C



Terri Castle (Left) and Ellen Haas Enjoy Company

# The Rice Brothers

From C4

They are used to curiosity. When walking down the street people stop the brothers to talk. "These are people who have a question and need an answer," he said.

Because of their super success orientation, neither brother has much time left to develop personal relationships with women. But they do like women, the taller the better.

"We don't date any small girls. Everything around us is normal size," Greg explained.

Said John, "I'm not looking to get married unless I find a real good deal."

Their constant companion and closest friend is Dickie Johnson, who works in his family's trucking business. Johnson drives a vintage Rolls-Royce, wears Calvin Klein jeans, Lacoste shirts and sometimes, his red patent leather cowboy boots. He is one flashy fellow.

Johnson's mother and the twins' foster mother worked together as waitresses at the Woolworth's store in downtown West Palm Beach and attended the same church. In high school, Johnson and the twins triple dated. Johnson was the driver.

They remained friends over the years and today, Johnson serves as John's and Greg's height. Many of the tasks the twins cannot perform — cranking a hand-start engine or reaching high places when the three are out on the town — Johnson does for them.

John and Greg are so adamant about associating with normal sized people — male or female — that they will have nothing to do with an organization known as Little People of America, founded by Billy Barty, also a dwarf and entertainer. The original concept for the group was to help dwarfs and midgets meet others of similar size.

Of the organization John said, "I guess it's better than stamp collecting."

The Rice brothers have no curiosity for the cause of their condition of birth, nor for the identity and location of their natural parents.

The experts say John and Greg are congenital dwarfs and maternal twins. Their dwarfism falls into the category of aspondylo-epiphyseal dysplasia dwarfism characterized by unusually bowed legs, large head and a well-formed, prominent nose. In acondroplastic dwarfism, the most common form of dwarfism, the head is large, the legs bowed but the bridge of the nose is scooped out.

The form of dwarfism to which the Rice brothers were born also is characterized by skeletal pressure on the spine which usually results in a shortened life span, facts which the twins never have investigated.

The experts also say dwarfs typically are born to normal-sized parents and often are abandoned at birth. An estimated one person in 2,000 is born short of stature — dwarfs or midgets. Midgets are small but proportionate people.

If John or Greg were to marry, the likelihood of their fathering dwarfs is the same for them as for the general population. In fact, most dwarfs produce normal-sized children.

The incidence of dwarf twins is no more unusual than twins of any other size or shape, according to Dr. Victor McKusick, physician in chief of Johns-Hopkins Hospital and whose specialty is hereditary disorders. Identical twins such as John and Greg are produced from the same egg. Dwarfism is a spontaneous genetic mutation, he said.

If John or Greg were to father children late in life, they would take the same risk of fathering children with abnormalities as the general population.

According to Dr. McKusick, "We don't know why (dwarfism) occurs. We do know that older fathers have an increased risk of begetting children with acondroplasyia. Older fathers have an increased risk of having children with dominant disorders."

Dr. McKusick once contacted the Rice brothers hoping to learn more about them and their heredity. John and Greg declined.

"I don't like needles," John said.

When the twins were in junior high school and wards of the state, they were shipped off to Shands Teaching Hospital in Gainsville for a week of tests.

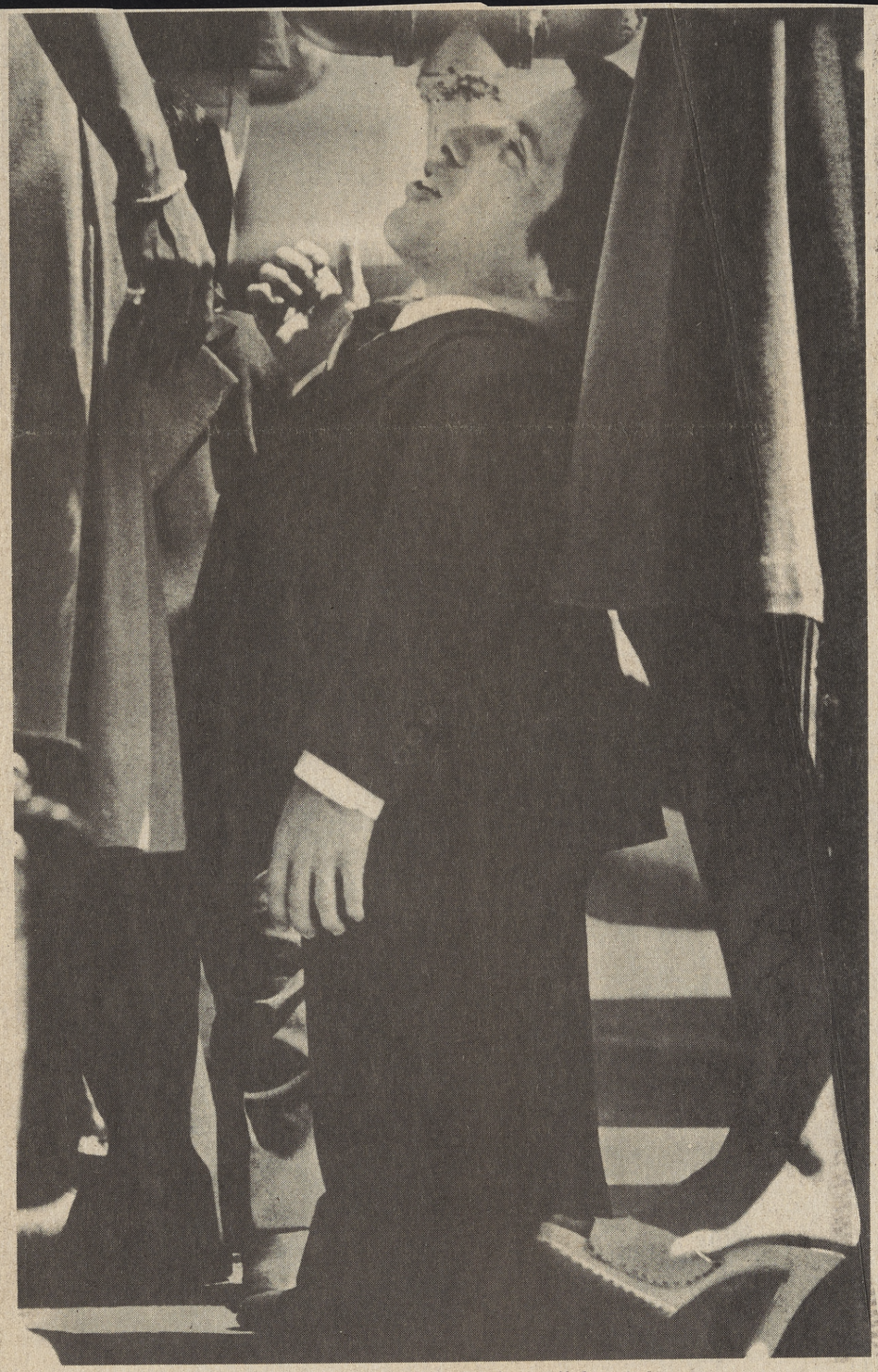
"They took X-rays, urine tests, spinal taps," John said. Neither twin would like to repeat the experience.

They have no interest in their medical makeup because, they said, there is no market for the information.

And besides, "We've never looked at (dwarfism) as a problem," Greg said.

For instance, not being able to reach a drinking fountain could be a problem, "but we won't let it be," John said.

"There's a lot of things that could be a problem if you let it be. But we have overcome our so-called handicap. "It isn't like we went to bed 6 feet tall and woke up 2-foot-10."



Being Leg Level Isn't Bad at All for John



AP Laserphoto

Peggy King, 3-foot-9, doesn't believe the size of the body is a true measure of human worth. She was named Teen Queen last week at the annual gathering of the Little People of America.

# Her tiny body's no handicap

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Physiologists may disagree, but Peggy King believes the size of your heart has no relationship to the size of your body.

The 17-year-old high school senior, who stands 3 feet 9 inches tall, has some advice for little people like her.

"Try to be as normal as possible ... realize that God loves you. If people can't accept you because of your size, they have a bigger problem than you do."

Peggy has tried to put her credo to work, participating since age 11 in an organization called Little People of America. Last week she was voted the organization's Teen Queen at the annual convention in Lancaster, Pa.

The convention was attended by 575 little people from across the United States.

Miss King stresses the words "little people" rather than midget or dwarf — the correct medical term for her condition.

"The word 'midget' isn't out with the public," she says. "We want them to know us as little people, because that's what we are, little people."

Her mother, Charlotte King, says she and her husband knew when Peggy was born that something was wrong, but it was five months before her condition was diagnosed as a form of dwarfism.

Neither her parents nor brothers, Patrick III, 21, and David, 20, or sister Judy, 15, have been afflicted by dwarfism.

"She's a very, very well-adjusted girl," Mrs. King boasts of Peggy. "She is what she is. She's always had the grace of God to accept it. She's had her hurts, but every kid's had their hurts."

Finding clothing for their daughter is a difficult task, admits Peggy's father, Patrick King Jr.

"We can't buy her little girl's clothes because she's a woman," he explains.

And shopping can be a problem when she's alone — particularly reaching a pay telephone or an elevator button.

Her summer job, secretarial work at a communications firm, also has its drawbacks. Particularly ominous is a large filing cabinet which "even the 'big' people have trouble with ... But it's not very often that I can't get a file out."





Associated Press

## 'Munchkin' tends bar

Parnell St. Aubin, one of the "Munchkins" in the movie cast of *The Wizard of Oz*, keeps his customers happy in Chicago as he plies drinks — which he has been doing for 36 years. St. Aubin said there may be no business like show business, but he'd rather be tending bar.

# Dwarf Has Dream Of Helping Others

HALLANDALE, Fla. (AP) — No taller than a 6-month-old infant, her legs deformed by an incurable type of dwarfism, 11-year-old Linda Brown dreams of one day helping others who have problems.

"You can sit around and feel sorry for yourself or you can get out and be happy," says the doll-child who measures only 28 inches tall and weighs one pound per inch.

Her bubbly voice and sharp intelligence belie her age and the years of pain that have confined her to a wheelchair — perhaps for life. But there is no sadness when she tells about her more than 100 bone fractures and 15 major operations to insert rods into her bones in hopes of making them grow.

Linda doesn't consider herself particularly brave and courageous. She says she is no different from other dwarfs, who ask only for the opportunity to lead productive lives and be accepted as human beings.

"I know I'd like to help people who have problems," says the youngster, an avid reader who admits to being a TV soap opera addict. "Perhaps I'll be a psychologist, but I'm not sure yet."

Linda already is an inspiration to the 40-some members of the South Florida Mini-Gators, a group of dwarfs who get together once a month to discuss the problems of living in a world of giants.

"It hurts when people compare us to 'normal' people," says Bill Albaugh, who at 51 is 4-foot-7 and weighs 135 pounds. He and his wife, Marie, 3-foot-11, don't have enough growth hormones.

"We call ourselves 'little people,' and those who don't have our afflictions are 'average size' people, but we're all 'normal,'" Albaugh says.

The Mini-Gators believe there would be better understanding if 'average size' people knew about the discomforts and inconveniences dwarfs must enture in daily living.

"Most of us can't reach a public telephone," says Ed Lang, the 31-year-old sports editor of a Miami Beach newspaper who gets around on crutches or in a wheelchair. Lang, like Linda, suffers from osteogenesis imperfecta, a calcium phosphorus imbalance that causes brittle bones.

His wife, Pat, suffers the same malady that has caused 70 bone fractures. Despite the walker she uses to get around, the 3-foot-5 Mrs. Lang does her own housework, cooks, drives her own car with pedal extensions and works fulltime as a bookkeeper.

Although the Albaughs and Langs live in houses that look no different outside or inside from those of their neighbors. In general, dwarfs do not use miniature furniture or make plumbing adjustments to accommodate their small bodies.

"Most of our friends are average size," says Mrs. Lang.

"Besides," adds her husband, "making drastic alterations would depreciate the property value. With only one out of every 10,000 births being a little person, that sort of limits the market,"

"Clothing is the biggest problem for us women," says Dorothy Lewis, 37, who stands 4 feet tall and weighs 126 pounds. She has acondraplasia, a bone deformity. Such dwarfs have average size torsos, but the bones from the hip to the ankle and from the shoulder to the wrist are stunted.

The Mini-Gators, started by Albaugh eight years ago as a chapter of the national Little People of America organization, includes five children and their parents. "Young little people are called 'little little people,'" says Albaugh.

At the monthly meetings, Linda searches out Amy Collard, 11, whose 3-foot-9 height and 60-pound weight hasn't hampered her from being a Girl Scout with plenty of merit badges for such things as camping, hiking and swimming.

She has back and leg problems caused by her acondraplasia and reluctantly wears leg braces.

Linda, who is tutored at home, goes to movies, the beach, picnics and shops with her 14-year-old, average-size sister, Kathy.